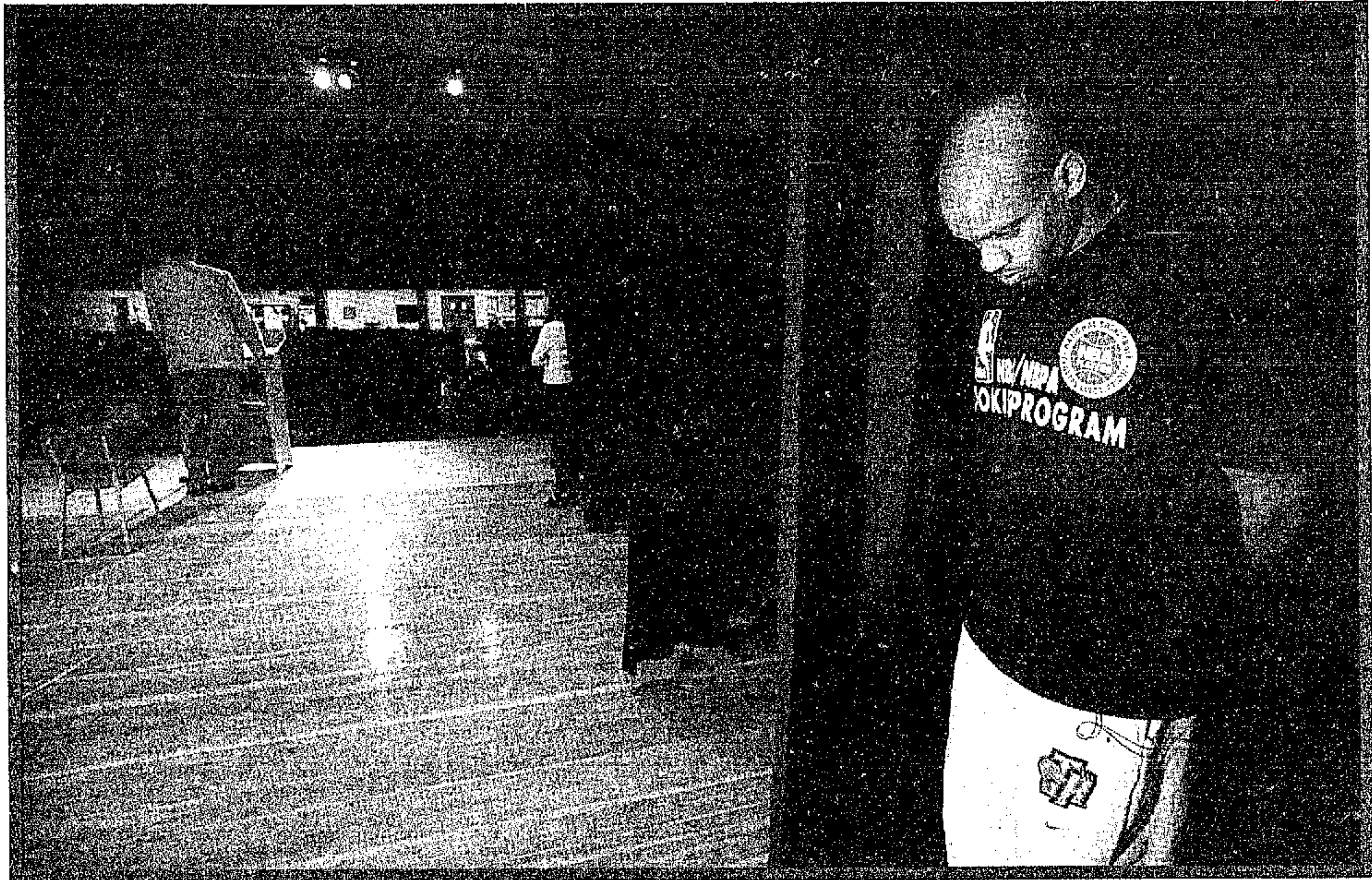


May 4, 1999



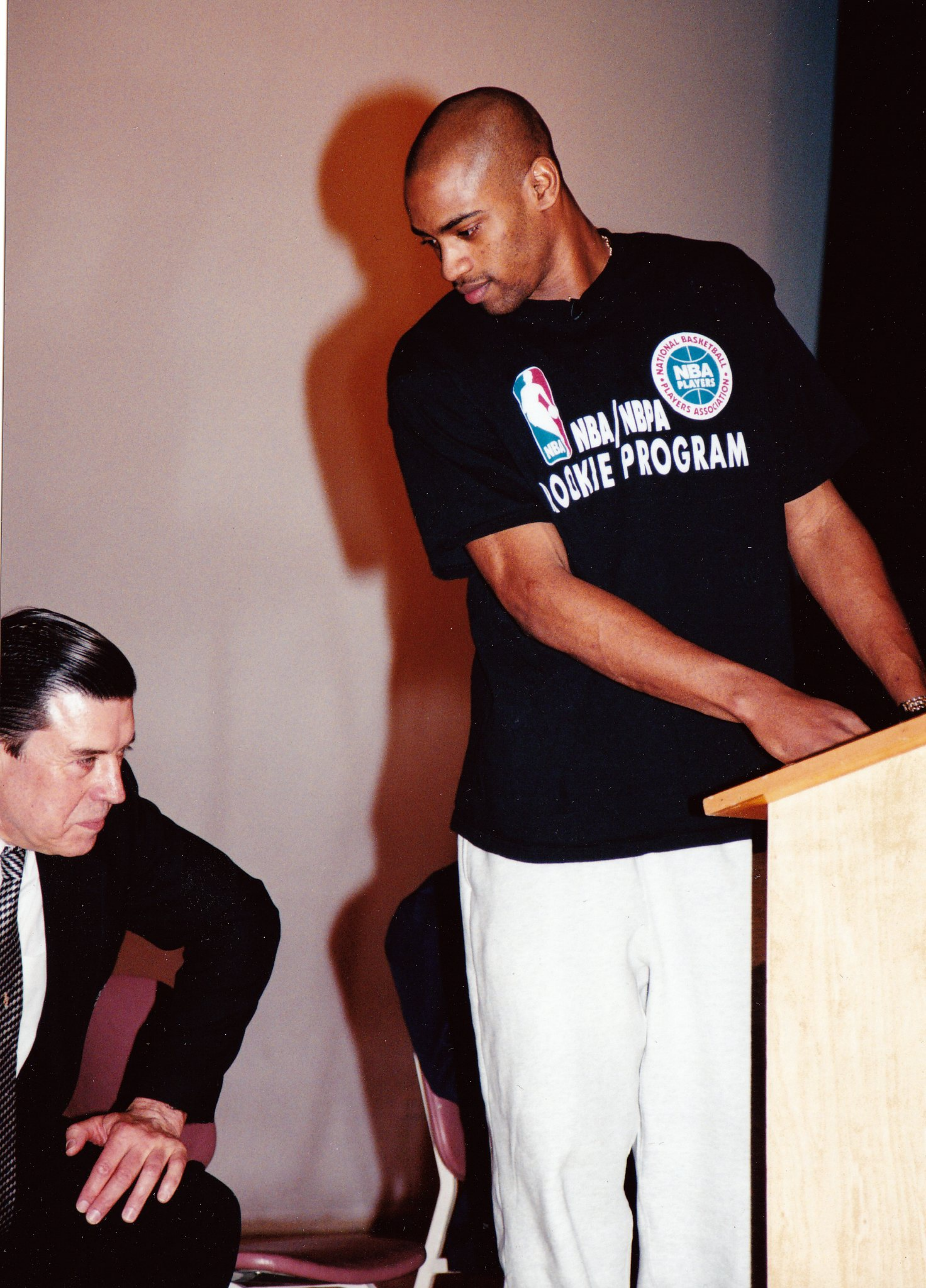
STEVE RUSSELL/TORONTO STAR

"AIR CANADA": Toronto Raptor Vince Carter waits to be introduced to students of Westview Centennial Secondary School.

















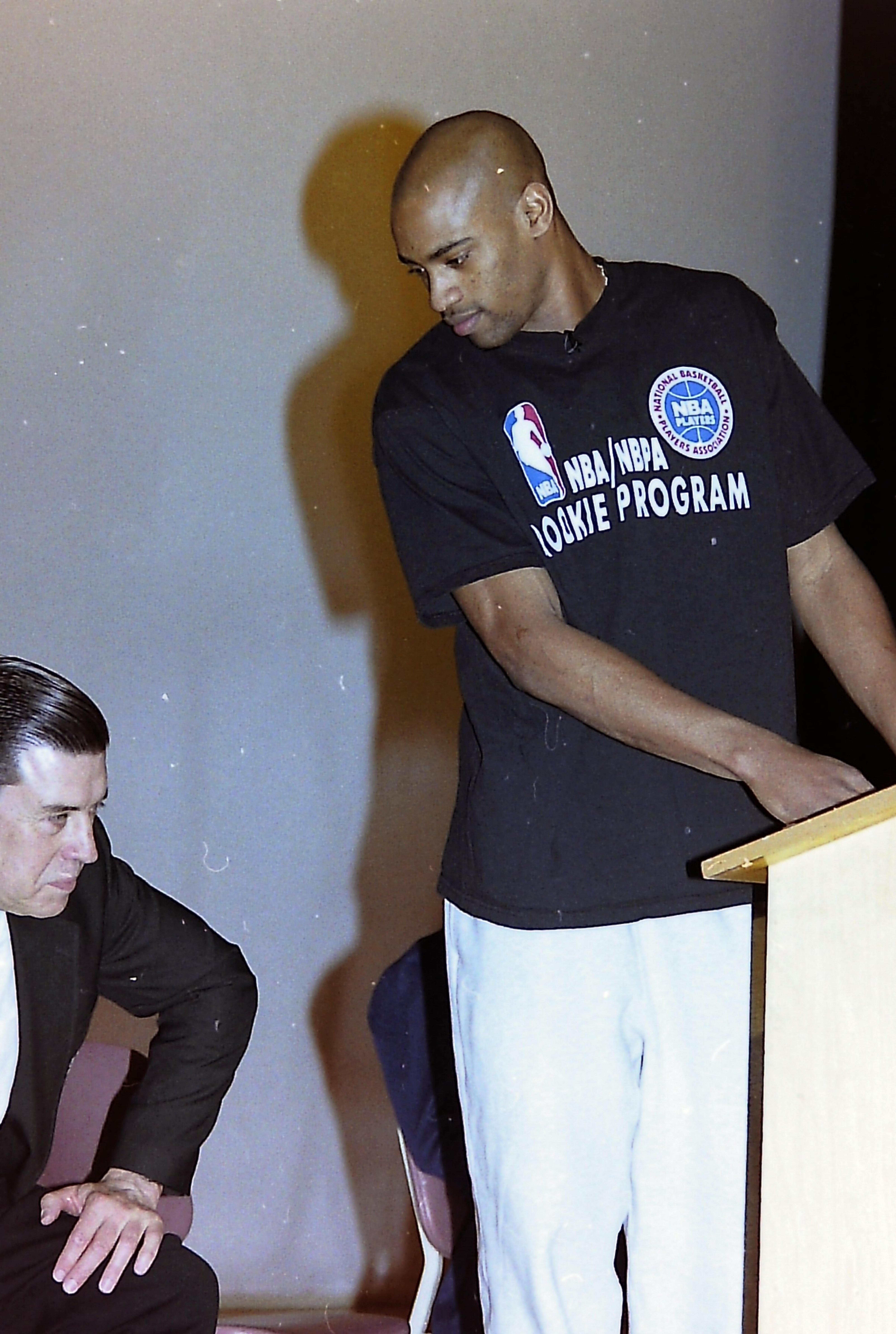










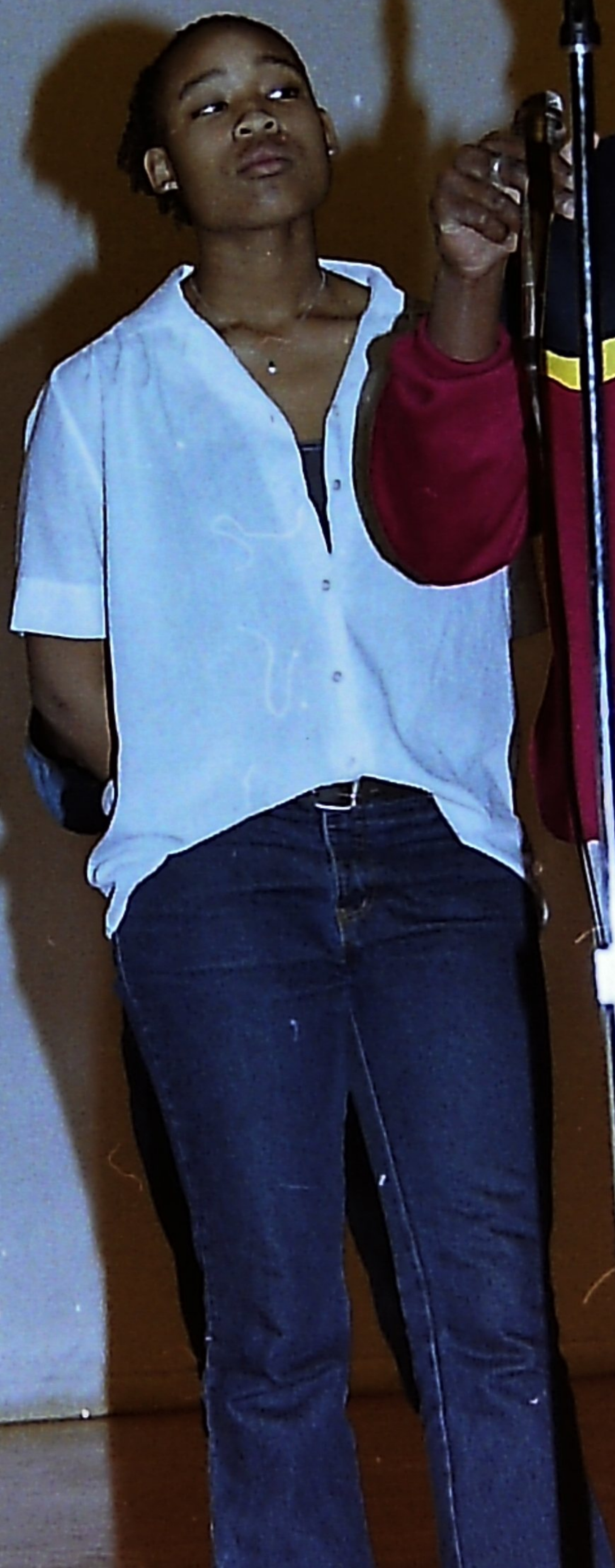
















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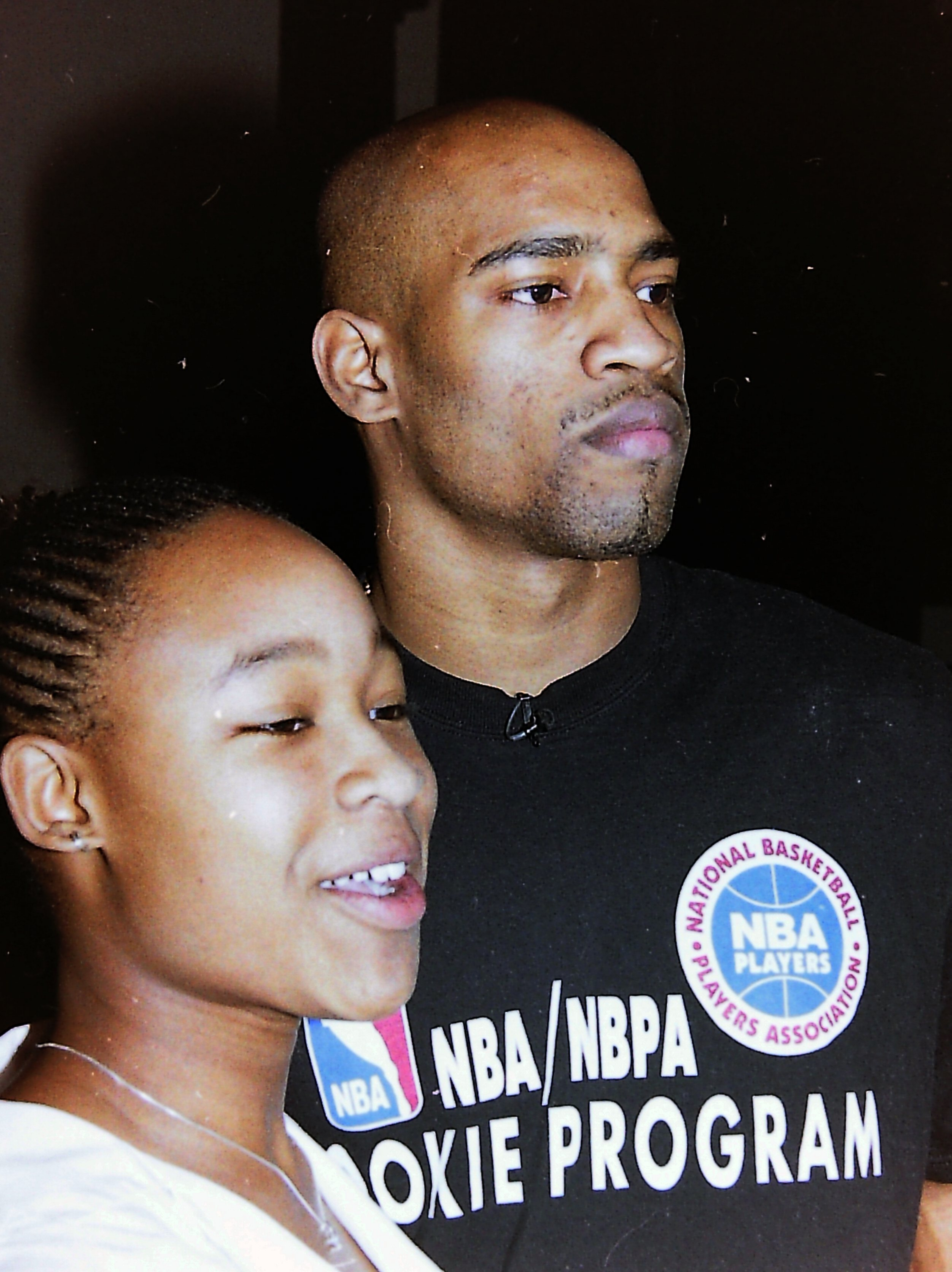
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ROOKIE PROGRAM



Carter creates hoopla on and off the court

May 4, 1999

The Raptors' rookie sensation applies his winning ways to basketball and to helping Toronto youth

BY AFRODITE BALOGH-TYSZKO
AND ANIKA JARRETT
YOUNG PEOPLE'S PRESS

Mean dunks. Dirty, grimy dunks. Blood-curdling, rim-rocking, crowd-shocking dunks. Dunks that are completely unfathomable until you witness one.

Yes, this is basketball — "Air Canada" style. And Raptor fans have rookie sensation Vince Carter to thank for all the hoopla.

Carter, 22, has helped lead the struggling expansion team out of the woods and into playoff contention. Each night, he pulls a new trick out of his well-equipped bag and elevates the game to a new zenith in Toronto.

High-flying dunks aside, the former North Carolina Tar Heel has the makings of a complete player. He is a fierce competitor and, inside the paint, he can make an opposing player look dumb and dumber. Give Carter the ball and watch things happen. The 6-foot-6 forward can soar over a defender but has the court vision of a guard who will selflessly pass the ball to open teammates.

Carter says he doesn't have a specific style. "I don't really have a patent move," he says. "(Perhaps) the fadeaway, I guess. I use that a lot, but eventually good teams will catch on."

Growing up, he took his playing cues from the best. "I like Dr. J. (Julius Irving)," Carter says. "I like how he plays, his moves."

One thing is for certain: once Carter takes flight within the perimeter of the key, he's tough to stop.

As much as his on-court athleticism distinguishes him as a prime candidate for rookie of the year honours, Carter is

an ambassador of goodwill and hard work both on and off the court.

Playing ball, he combines his remarkable basketball skills with a tremendous sense of fair play and modesty — qualities that have led to his winning most sportsmanlike player honours for the Central Division. Off the court, Carter is careful to avoid the trappings of celebrity — the fast-paced life of the young, handsome and wealthy — choosing instead to lead a quiet existence between games.

"(The NBA) is tough," says the young superstar. "You have to learn how to take care of your body and to get rest. A lot of players don't do that."

Despite the tremendous rigours of this year's shortened NBA schedule, Carter has chosen to volunteer what little free time he has as a role model and mentor to a select group of Toronto youth, par-

ticipants in the Vince's Hoop Group program. The program is an extension of his Embassy of Hope Foundation, based in his hometown of Daytona Beach, Fla.

"I'm all about putting smiles on young kids' faces," says Carter. "As soon as I got drafted I started the organization."

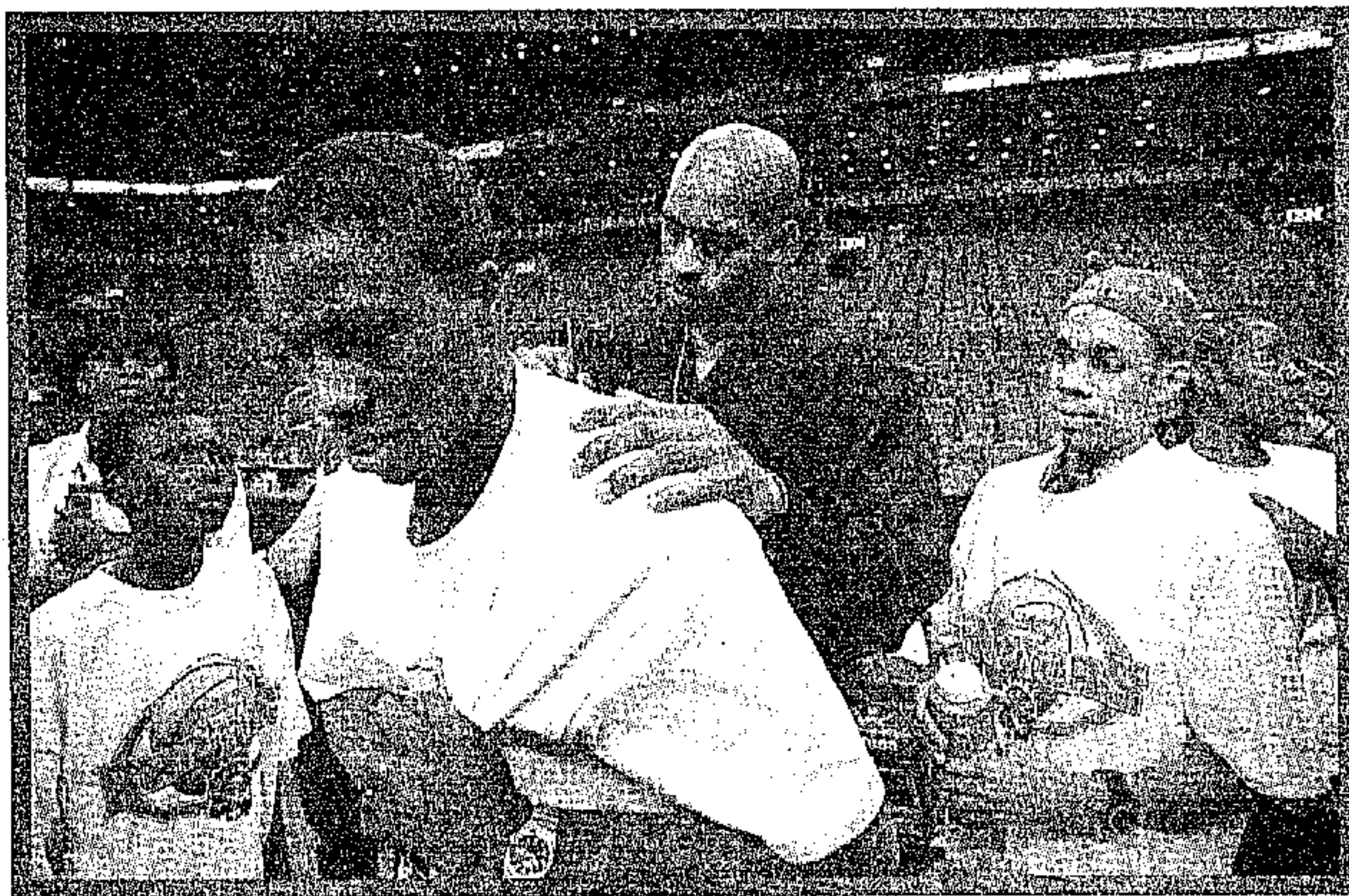
He selected Westview Centennial Secondary School in North York as the home for his program because he was impressed with the school's unique approach to motivating students and its strong links to the community.

The 85 students who take part in Vince's Hoop Group are asked to set challenging academic and social goals. The reward for fulfilling these objectives is great seats to a Raptor home game at Carter's personal expense and the op-

➤ Please see Carter, C2

'(Raptors rookie Vince Carter) not only has fantastic basketball skills, which scores him pretty high on the "cool" scale with kids, but he seems to be very well-rounded and have a real sense of integrity. Certainly, good footsteps for our students to follow in.'

— PETER STEFANIUK
Westview Centennial
Secondary School
physical education teacher



ANDREW STAWICK/TORONTO STAR

HOOP DREAMS: Carter signs T-shirts for members of Vince's Hoop Group — students who set high academic and community service goals this year and achieved them.